



REDI BEST PRACTICE

Fostering Inclusive Excellence: Criteria & Interview Questions to Address Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) in Faculty Searches



Foreword

Inclusion is fundamental to excellence.

The Faculty of Medicine's commitment to inclusive practises is showcased in the [Four Pillars of the Strategic Plan: Transforming Health for Everyone](#).

Pillar 1, Education: "We must [...] identify emerging educational needs in human resource planning, and adapt our programs to meet those needs. This involves expanding the group of potential learners, domestically and internationally, including those who identify as part of historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups."	Pillar 2, Research: "By including people and patients and embedding respect, diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of research, we aim to reach broader audiences, which can ultimately lead to informing policy, programs and practise at a provincial, national and global scale."	Pillar 3, Organization: "We will eliminate systemic barriers, ensure equity across all of our policies, processes, guidelines and norms, and foster a culture that actively extinguishes any discrimination that may arise. It is in this culture and environment that all of our existing and future community members can thrive."	Pillar 4, Partnerships: "We will continue to engage with our partners in ongoing efforts to counteract racism and discrimination in the healthcare system."
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Furthermore, the stated goal of the Faculty of Medicine's [Transforming Culture Initiative](#) is, "To transform our culture by creating and sustaining respectful learning and work environments that reflect our values, embody principles of equity, diversity and inclusion, are anti-racist and will address the root causes of oppression to provide safe spaces for participation and the exercise of human rights for all members of our community."

The guide is intended to support hiring committees as they seek to understand candidates' competency in fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). The criteria and questions in this guide should be used to reveal candidates' strengths and experience with EDI and allow them to vividly showcase their excellence as partners in these pursuits.

Prior to assessing EDI competency, however, it is crucial that hiring committee members discuss and reach a shared understanding about the qualifications for the position(s) and how they will evaluate the candidates' skills. Ideally, these conversations will have taken place prior to the creation of the job posting.

See "How to Use this Resource" (below) for more information about crucial steps that hiring committees and units/departments should take before seeking look-fors and identifying interview questions.

What is Inclusive Excellence?

According to the [UBC Office of Equity and Inclusion Website](#):

Inclusive Excellence (IE) is a systems-wide approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion. IE appears as a key strategy in [Shaping UBC's Next Century \(Strategic Plan 2018 – 2028\)](#):

Strategy 4. Inclusive excellence:

Cultivate a diverse community that creates and sustains equitable and inclusive campuses.

IE states that true excellence in an institution is unattainable without inclusion – and in fact, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to excellence. It moves away from historical approaches to diversity that focused on numbers and representation. Instead, IE helps us think about the institution as a vibrant community that can create excellence by embedding diversity throughout UBC.

Guiding Principles

Making excellence inclusive is a strategy and a practice, with the goal of achieving Inclusive Excellence at UBC. The work we do to address inequities at UBC and to create a supportive campus for all students is premised on the following five principles.^{1,2}

Cultural and social differences of learners enrich and enhance the University.

A welcoming campus community actively engages all of its diversity in the service of student and institutional learning.

Excellence cannot be achieved without inclusion.

We need structural and systemic support for all students, faculty, and staff in order for students to thrive, and for the university to achieve excellence in research and teaching.

Inclusion is more than just numbers.

It is not enough to welcome students from all backgrounds; their experience enriches the learning environment, and their wellbeing while attending matters.

Systems-change must be prioritized.

We need to examine policies, procedures, and practices, and set up measurable outcomes to keep the university accountable.

Collaboration and partnerships are key to success.

The Equity & Inclusion Office works collaboratively with partners and builds upon existing strengths.

For more information visit the [UBC Office of Equity and Inclusion's Website](#).

How to Use this Resource



Read this guide before writing job postings, reviewing applications, or choosing interview questions.



Fostering discussions about inclusive excellence

This guide is best used as a prompt for members of hiring committees and units/departments to discuss what matters most for equity, diversity & inclusion competency in a specific hiring process.

In providing many criteria and questions, this guide is meant to encourage hiring committees and unit/department members to consider the entire hiring process.

It is critical that committees and units/departments find clarity and shared agreement about what EDI competencies they are seeking, what those competencies look like within the role, and what interview questions will best help assess candidates' EDI competencies.

Before writing the job posting...

- Engage committee and unit/department members in a group reading of the “Look-Fors” section and reach an agreement about the specific EDI competencies and traits that are most important for an ideal candidate to demonstrate.
- Use those insights to write the EDI-specific portions of the job posting, ensuring that it is clear to the applicants which experiences and competencies they should highlight.

Before reviewing applications (CV, Cover Letters, EDI Statements, etc.)...

- Create an evaluation rubric using the look-fors identified. Committee members and unit/department members should have a shared, mutually agreed-upon lens for evaluating which applicants are (for example) “Excellent,” “Good,” “Fair,” and “Not Applicable” regarding those EDI competencies.
- Use the rubric to identify which applicants to interview.

Before choosing interview questions...

- Engage committee members and unit/department members in a discussion of EDI look-fors and reach an agreement about what you are seeking to learn from the candidates in the interview.
- As a group, identify the interview questions the group feels will best allow the candidates to showcase their skills and experience.
- Use the information from that discussion to create a rubric that will allow the group to evaluate (for example) “Excellent,” “Good,” “Fair,” and “Not Applicable” in those EDI competencies during the interviews.

Look-Fors: Criteria to Assess Candidates' Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Competencies

Look-fors are traits and experiences that indicate positive EDI competencies.

- Use them to write clear job postings and communicate what EDI competencies are being sought in potential applicants.
- Seek them within applicants' CVs, cover letters, or (where applicable) EDI statements for the position.
- Listen for them in candidates' responses to interview questions as well as in teaching or research presentations (where applicable).

For more information, see "How to Use This Resource" at the beginning of this guide.



Look-Fors: General EDI-Relevant Experience

- Experience working collaboratively to support EDI (application, interview)
- Evidence of intercultural experiences (working with groups of different cultures, religions, ethnicity, disciplines...) (application, interview)
- Experience working with or in support of multiple, diverse historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups to advance EDI (application, interview)
- Experience working with Indigenous support units or First Nations or Indigenous communities (application, interview)

Look-Fors: Teaching Roles

Innovative

- Experience with changing or adapting courses, curriculum, or assessments to better support historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)
- Experience responding effectively to feedback related to teaching in order to benefit the experiences of students from historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)

Context-aware

- Awareness about the different types of barriers that influence historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups within courses (application, interview)

Experienced

- Empathetic approach to responding to student accommodation and the need to respond to support diverse students, maintain privacy and maintain university standards (application, interview)
- Experience mentoring and supporting students from historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)

Look-Fors: Research Roles

Collaborative

- Experience co-creating research projects with...
 - interdisciplinary groups
 - members of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups
 - Indigenous communities or Indigenous support units or organizations
- Ability to integrate feedback relating to experiences of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups in order to improve research practices (application, interview)

Inclusion-minded

- Experience creating changes in research projects to create results that are beneficial to members of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)
- Awareness of how research environments can create barriers to inclusion for historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)
- Experience creating inclusive environments for research for graduate students of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)

Communicative

- Experience translating research to a general audience and engaging in outreach about research to historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)

Look-Fors: Mentorship or Supervision Roles

Future-focused & reflective

- Experience with goal-setting for their work as a mentor or supervisor (application, interview)
- Reflection on practices to evaluate if practices are effective (application, interview)
- A sense of how their identity and lived experiences influences their role and practice as a mentor or supervisor (application, interview)
- Growth in their mentorship role and an evolving practices (application, interview)
- Experience mentoring students from historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups, including navigating challenges and changing practices (application, interview)

Look-Fors: Leadership Roles

Knowledgeable of anti-oppression work & approaches:

- Reflective approach to EDI and demonstrated knowledge and commitment to anti-racism. (application, interview)
- Demonstrated understanding of EDI concepts and their application in the university context:
 - Differences and relationships between concepts such as equity, inclusion, diversity, power, and privilege (interview, reference check)
 - EDI competencies as a necessary aspect of academic and leadership excellence (interview, reference check)
 - Human rights and their implementation in a post-secondary setting, including consideration of the distinctions between human rights and academic freedom (interview, reference check)

Broadly experienced:

- Experience and proven track record of working strategically to identify and embed EDI in programs, practices and policies within a large and de-centralized university system (application, interview, reference check). For example:
 - **Recruitment & Retention:** Leading changes to recruit and retain faculty from historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups, and experience leading revisions to admissions and financial aid processes to support the recruitment and retention of scholars from historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups (application, interview)
 - **Decolonization:** Creating systemic change within an institution towards decolonization (application, interview)
 - **Teaching:** Using inclusive teaching practices including anti-oppressive and decolonial pedagogies (application, teaching statement, interview)
 - **Culture change:** Implementing EDI as a priority for faculty members and senior post-secondary leaders (interview)
 - **Internationalisation:** Working on internationalisation efforts through the lens of equity, inclusion (interview)
 - **Lived experience** as a member of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized community (Indigenous people, women, people with disabilities, racialized people, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people) and ability to connected lived experience to their work (interview)

Collaborative:

- ...With international, interdisciplinary and diverse groups of faculty, leading and collaborating in this systemic change work (application, interview)
- ...With Indigenous-identified partners within and outside the university, holding effective relationships with Indigenous partners, including effectively navigating differences between EDI (application, interview)

Adept at conflict engagement:

Conflict engagement is an important EDI skill for leaders working with diverse groups of people, enabling them to build belonging and inclusion for especially marginalized groups.

- Supporting effective conflict engagement within diverse groups (application, interview)
- Fostering an environment of respect and inclusivity within diverse groups (application, interview)
- Leading a unit towards growth and learning as they navigate complex conflicts related to diverse values, identities and lived experiences (application, interview, reference check)

Interview Questions to Assess Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Competencies

This section contains examples of questions that could be asked in the interview process to help you assess candidates' EDI competencies.

It is important that the questions connect to the agreed-upon criteria for excellence being evaluating.

For more information, see "How to Use This Resource" at the beginning of this guide.



General EDI Understanding Questions

- Within your field of study, what are approaches that you have used to engage in EDI work?
- What learning have you done in the past couple of years to deepen your understanding of Indigenous peoples and other historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized communities in Canada?
- Describe a time in which you made a mistake/(or incorrectly made an assumption) that negatively impacted a group or a member of a historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized group, what did you learn from this experience?
- Describe a time in which you received critical feedback on a policy or procedure or practice that related to EDI. How did you respond?

Track Record & Experience Questions

- Can you tell me about a time in which you led an initiative to enhance equity, inclusion or belonging of a historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized group(s)?
- As a leader, what have you done to promote a sense of equity, inclusion and belonging amongst your direct reports?
- Can you describe how your experiences and background have prepared you to be an effective leader capable of spearheading equity and inclusion?
- What experiences have you had with recruiting, hiring, training, and/or supervising a diverse workforce?
- What challenging situation have you faced relating to equity and/or inclusion? How did you handle it?
- What specific experiences have you had addressing the concerns of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized [communities] [learners] [populations] at your current or previous institution? What role have you taken in addressing those concerns?

Future Vision Questions

- Knowing what you know now, what are some of the types of initiatives that you think might be important to enhance Indigenization and/or decolonization within (the unit)?
- If you were to be selected, what UBC initiatives related to EDI would you want to support? Why is this of interest to you? What past experiences position you to to implement these changes?
- Why do you think it's important to address equity, inclusion issues in this position? How might you do that?

Role-Specific Interview Questions to Assess EDI Competencies

This section contains examples of interview questions to help you assess candidates' EDI competency for specific types of roles.

The hiring committee and units/departments should select interview questions that connect to the criteria for excellence they identified and communicated in the job posting.

For more information, read "How to Use This Resource" at the beginning of this guide.

EDI Competencies in Teaching Roles

Responding to feedback in teaching and growth:

- This question relates to your ability to create inclusive learning environments for students. Can you provide an example in which you received feedback from a student and then made changes to the course to reflect the feedback? How did you respond to the student?
- What are mistakes that you have made in teaching that relate to gaps in your knowledge about supports for historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups? What did you learn from this experience?
- Have considerations related to equity, inclusion played a role in shaping your teaching and advising styles? If so, how?
- Scenario type questions: There is no "right" answer to these questions, we are looking for how you might approach these questions.
 - You are teaching a seminar third year course. There is one Indigenous student in your class on engineering/ecology/medicine and the student repeatedly speaks without raising her hand and suggests that the approach (eg. taxonomy) that is being covered in this class is colonial and promotes white supremacist thinking. What do you do?

Fostering inclusive classrooms:

- Tell us about your past experiences in teaching and mentoring experiences with students from diverse cultural backgrounds or lived experiences?
- Can you provide an example of how you have been able to encourage students with very different cultural backgrounds and lived experiences to participate in class activities or discussions?
- Can you describe an innovative [program] [activity/assessment] [teaching strategy] addressing EDI, decolonization or Indigenization that you developed or were involved in?

EDI Competencies in Research Roles

Inclusion:

- What are practices that you have implemented to help create an inclusive or equitable environment for graduate students within your lab?
- Within your lab, what practices do you implement to ensure that students are able to provide you with feedback related to your research group or experiences within your lab/field-work?

Design and dissemination of research:

- How have you designed your research to help remove barriers to participation for Indigenous peoples and other historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized communities?
- How have you disseminated the results of your research to ensure more equitable benefits for Indigenous peoples and other historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized communities?

Humility in receiving feedback

- Can you provide us with an example of a time that you received feedback about your research from the perspective of someone (or an organization) from a historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized community. How did you respond to that feedback?

Thoughtful problem solving:

- Suppose one of your graduate students has started a research project working with a small Latin American farming community. You have received feedback from an NGO that you have a close relationship with that this student is causing tensions within the community because of the lack of respect she has shown for the time of the village members supporting this project. What might you do?

EDI in Leadership & Mentorship

- What are some of the challenges you have faced mentoring students/staff/colleagues from historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups? What changes in your mentoring/leadership approach have you made to improve your practices?
- How has your identity and lived experiences influenced your current practices as a mentor or supervisor?
- What challenges do you feel your discipline or post-secondary education more generally faces as we move into the future, especially regarding human rights?
- In the past couple of years, how have you worked to deepen your understanding of Indigenous peoples and other historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized communities in Canada?

More Information

The Office of Respectful Environments, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) provides additional Best Practices resources related to Inclusive Excellence and inclusive hiring:

[Managing Power Dynamics in Hiring and Search Committees](#)

[Best Practices for Mitigating Cognitive Biases in the Hiring Process](#)

[Best Practices for Equitable and Inclusive Job Postings](#)

Questions? Reach out to your unit's HR/administration office for support.

Contact
REDI:

Have feedback about this document? Want to learn more? | <https://redi.med.ubc.ca/resourcefeedback> | redi.office@ubc.ca



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